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Farm Broadcasters Letter



Letter No. 2196

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DRY MILK TO MEXICO

According to Sec'y of Agriculture John Block, the U.S. sold 10,000 metric tons of nonfat dry milk valued at \$7.4 million to Mexico. Deliveries by the Commodity Credit Corporation will be made in February. The sale provides for payment in U.S. dollars. No credit arrangements are involved in this sale.

WORLD CROP PRODUCTION - WHEAT

World production for 1984/85 is estimated at a record 509.5 million tons, up 2.7 million or less than 1 pct. from last month and 4 pct. above a year ago, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Changes from a month ago include: U.S. wheat production estimated at 70.6 million tons, up 0.7 million or 1 pct. from last month and an increase of 7 pct. from last year; Argentina, wheat production estimated at 12.5 million tons, up 1.0 million or 9 pct. from last month, and an increase of 2 pct. from last year's revised estimate of 12.3 million; China, wheat production estimated at a record 85.5 million tons, up 0.5 million or less than 1 pct. from last month and an increase of 5 pct. from last year; and the European Community, wheat production estimated at a record 75.7 million tons, up 0.4 million or less than 1 pct. from last month and an increase of 28 pct. from last year.

USSR WINTER GRAIN

The estimated 1984 grain harvest of the USSR remains unchanged at 170 million tons, including 75 million in wheat, 84 million in coarse grains, and 11 million in miscellaneous grains and pulses. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, conditions for winter grains to be harvested in 1985 continue favorable. No more than average winterkill is expected. The area seeded to winter grains last fall is estimated at 35-36 million hectares (88-90 million acres), up slightly from the previous year.

USSR GRAIN SITUATION & OUTLOOK

The USSR continues to actively cover its 1984/85 grain import needs, still estimated at 50 million tons for July-June 1984/85, according to a U.S. Department of Agriculture report. Winter grain conditions in the USSR continue reasonably favorable. Over the past month, Soviet grain buyers were active in the world marketplace. Soviet wheat purchases from all origins are placed in the area of 23 million tons, or at nearly 90 pct. of the projected annual imports of 26 million. Recent large purchases of U.S. corn, in excess of 3 million tons, have pushed total coarse grain purchases from all sources to nearly 15 million tons, or nearly two-thirds of projected imports.

U.S. OILSEEDS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's January world oilseed production forecast for 1984/85 at 185.3 million tons is up slightly from last month's report. Minor increases in soybean, cottonseed, and peanut production were largely offset by small decreases in sunflowerseed and rapeseed forecasts. U.S. 1984/85 season average price forecasts decreased 30 cents per bushel for soybeans to \$5.75-\$6.65. In the absence of Soviet purchases of soybean meal in the world market, forecast USSR imports are 1 million tons, down 0.5 million tons from last month.

WORLD OILSEEDS PRODUCTION

World production for oilseeds of all types for 1984/85 is estimated at a record 185.3 million tons, up 0.6 million or less than 1 pct. from a month ago, and up 12 pct. from 1983/84, according to a U.S. Department of Agriculture report. Soybean production for 1984/85 is estimated at 90.2 million tons, up slightly from last month and up 10 pct. from last year. In Brazil, oilseed production is est. at 1.5 million tons, up 0.3 million or 23 pct. from last month and up 59 pct. from last year. Growers have planted more cotton than expected. In USSR, cottonseed production is est. at 4.8 million tons, up 0.2 million or 4 pct. from last month, but up 4 pct. from last year. In China, cottonseed production is est. at a record 11.3 million tons, up 0.3 million or 3 pct. from last month and up 22 pct. from last year.

WORLD COARSE GRAINS PROD.

World production of coarse grains for 1984/85 is estimated at a record 790.1 million tons, up 1.9 million or less than 1 pct. from last month and 15 pct. above last year, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Some important changes from a month ago include: Chinese production, estimated at a record 97.5 million tons, up 2.5 million or 3 pct. from last month and an increase of 6 pct. from last year; South Africa coarse grain production estimated at 8.5 million tons, down 0.7 million or 8 pct. from last month, but up 64 pct. from last year; and Argentina's production is estimated at 18.5 million tons, up 0.5 million or 3 pct. from last month, and an increase of 3 pct. from last year.

U.S. MEAT PRODUCTION

U.S. meat production in 1985 is likely to be slightly below 1984's record, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Lower red meat output should more than offset further poultry production gains. The December hogs and pigs report showed slower turnaround in pork production than expected previously. Forecast 1985 was reduced, with most of the decrease expected in the last half of the year. Beef output was below expectations in late 1984 as more fed cattle than anticipated were carried into 1985. Cow slaughter continues at a high level. Forecast early 1985 beef output has been increased.

CROP PROD. HIGHLIGHTS

The following are the highlights of the crop production released January 11 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. All cotton production is estimated at 13.3 million bales, 71 pct. above 1983 but down 1 pct. from Dec. 1. Citrus production is forecast at 11.1 million tons, down 2 pct. from Dec. 1...5 pct. above last season but 17 pct. less than 1982-83. Orange production is forecast at 176 million boxes (6.78 million metric tons), down 3 pct. from Dec. 1, up 4 pct. from last season but 22 pct. less than 1982-83. All tobacco production is forecast at 1.74 billion pounds, 22 pct. above 1983. (For more information, call 202-447-2127.)

FROM OUR TELEVISION
SERVICE

"Precision Applied Tillage"...Dr. Albert Trowse, a USDA consultant from Auburn, Alabama, describes a new tillage system called "Precision Applied Tillage," and how it could become a relief for farmers plagued by rising costs, poor crops and soil erosion. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (296)

"World Oilseed Outlook"...U.S. soybean and other oilseed exports continue their sluggish pace, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's most recent analysis. USDA analyst Richard McDonnell talks about factors contributing to this situation. Vic Powell interviews. (297)

"World Cotton Situation"...A recent U.S. Department of Agriculture report estimates that world cotton use will reach a record 69.7 million bales in fiscal year 1985. USDA analyst Gordon Lloyd talks about the 1985 outlook for cotton. Vic Powell interviews. (298)

"Corn Hybrid Quality - 1985"...Jim Shearl, manager with the Illinois Crop Improvement Association, talks about the availability and quality of corn seed for 1985, despite poor harvest weather in many parts of the corn belt. Gary Beaumont interviews. (299)

"Cutting Production Expenditures"...Royce Hinton, Univ. of Illinois, focuses on expenditures for inputs in 1985, and offers ways for farmers to cut costs on these items and invest in the most profitable ones. Gary Beaumont interviews. (300)

ANIMAL EMBRYOS
IMPORTS

The public has until June 15 to comment on a U.S. Department of Agriculture proposal to establish regulations for importing livestock embryos into the United States. To bring such embryos into the U.S., importers would have to obtain a permit from USDA. Permits would be issued only for embryos conceived in countries that do not have foot-and-mouth disease. Comments may be sent to T. O. Gessel, APHIS, USDA, 728 Federal Bldg., Hyattsville, Md. 20782. The USDA intends to hold a public hearing on the issue and will announce details later.

SUGAR IMPORT
QUOTA

Sec'y of Agriculture John Block announced the 1984/85 sugar import quota is being changed from the period Oct. 1, 1984 - Sept. 30, 1985... to Oct. 1, 1984 - Nov. 30, 1985. This change is intended to correct an imbalance in the domestic sugar supply situation brought about by a larger than expected high fructose corn syrup displacement of sugar consumption and higher than anticipated beet sugar production during 1983/84.

TURKEY GROWERS

Turkey growers in 20 major producing States intend to raise 174 million turkeys in 1985, up 5 pct. from the 165 million in 1984, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Turkey eggs in incubators on Jan. 1, 1985 totaled 19.1 million, 15 pct. above the 16.6 million a year earlier. (For more information, call 202-447-2123.)

U.S. SOYBEANS
TO EGYPT?

Egypt's Ministry of Industry has indicated that it is seeking government approval to import 150,000 to 200,000 tons of soybeans. Historically, the majority of Egyptian soybean imports are from the United States. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's total 1984/85 soybean import forecast for Egypt is 75,000 tons.

OFF MIKE

We've got a new thing cooking, and you may be interested if you do television at your station. On January 24, we will conduct a satellite television press conference with Sec'y Block on Westar IV. If you can access that satellite and would like to be involved, let me know. We will be contacting all the NAFB members who are on television (at least those we can identify), but we may miss some. So, let us know...Layne Beaty reports he has a new telephone number out in California. Earlier we had reported that he and Virginia would be in Del Mar, CA 92014, Apt. 610, 1552 Camino del Mar through February. The address is the same, the phone number is changed to: 619-755-7698...We get the word that the Missouri News Division of Learfield Communications celebrates 10 years of being on the air this month. Our Congratulations!...A number of you wrote to ask for a free copy of the Yearbook of Agriculture, including Bruce Lease (KWOA, Worthington, MN). He also reflected back on the tractorcade that came into Washington a few years back and reported that there is a one tractor tractorcade going from the northern border of Minnesota to the southern border of Texas. Purpose is to draw attention to the plight of the farmers. I suspect this isn't new information for you, because the story has been in the news quite a bit already...Arnold Hartigan (Boise Inter-agency Fire Center, Boise, ID) called to pass on an interesting story about a group in his part of the country that call themselves the American Search Pig Association. They're members of the National Association of Search and Rescue, and their idea is that all back-packers and hikers going into the mountains and back country would have to carry truffles in their pockets. Then, if they got lost or were buried in a snow slide, the ASPS would send out a pig to sniff for the truffles and make the rescue. Interesting idea...Jerry Reed (WIBX, Utica, NY) reports he received an interesting gift from a family member...a genuine "cow chip" clock! Epoxy makes it acceptable, according to Jerry, and he says it has the city folks at the station not knowing quite what to think (we can understand that). Incidentally, Jerry also says the clock is not, repeat not powered by methane...And it looks like we've avoided yet another week of having to pass on one or more pork belly jokes. Whew!


FROM OUR RADIO
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1442...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) Considering the incredible distances and time constraints it's amazing that the transportation of agricultural products from the farm to the retail store goes as smoothly as it does. Brenda Curtis explores the immense challenges of the agricultural transportation system.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1431...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; The President's farm policy unfolds; Soviet farm woes; FCIC expands "actual production history" program; The effects of rail deregulation.

CONSUMER TIME #924...(Weekly reel of five 2½-3 min features) Problems with community growth; I thought I'd thaw a pipe; Hopping down the bunny trail; Antifreeze as poison; Police on horseback.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Fri, Jan. 25, Red meat production report; Cattle on feed; Mon, Jan. 28, Poultry production, Tues, Jan. 29, Crop and weather update; Thurs, Jan. 31, Agricultural prices. Dial the USDA National News Lines 202/488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. EST each working day.


JAMES L. JOHNSON, Chief
Chief, Radio-Television Division